

**2012-  
2013**

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

**LOCAL INITIATIVE SCHOOLS  
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**  
***PALMS ELEMENTARY***

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## LOCAL INITIATIVE SCHOOL PLAN

### A. MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Palms Elementary Community is to develop productive citizens through a rigorous academic curriculum and appropriate social/emotional guidance.

### B. VISION STATEMENT (1-2 pages, includes Section A)

At Palms Elementary our focus is on student learning and achievement. We believe that our job is to create a nurturing environment in which students are encouraged to become creative thinkers and life-long learners. We envision a school that fosters independent effort and achievement while instilling values of citizenship and cooperation. Every student that attends Palms Elementary will receive a quality education that prepares them for a successful academic future and to be a productive member of society. We are aware that each student's academic achievement starts with a sense of wellbeing. Wellbeing is dependent on high self-esteem and an attitude within each student that he or she is capable of being successful academically and socially. For these reasons, we teach to the whole child.

We provide classroom environments in which students are treated with respect by their peers as well as the adults in the room. We honor and incorporate each child's culture and previous experiences into the learning environment. These values extend to all staff members and to special events such as our International Festival. Many of our parents are immigrants and do not feel they have skills and/or experience to contribute to the Palms Elementary Community. We strive to give parents opportunities to be involved in ways they feel comfortable and in which they can contribute to their child's learning. Creating a positive experience for parents develops a positive attitude toward the school, and this, in turn, becomes imparted on our students.

We recognize that each student is unique and learns in a variety of ways. We strive to incorporate different learning modalities and focus on what Howard Gardner referred to as "multiple intelligences." This method allows students to demonstrate mastery of content standards using their recognized strengths. As a result, students feel successful and are allowed to affirm their abilities and build their confidence. By feeling confident in some areas, students are more willing to explore alternate intelligences and modalities.

Risk-taking is a very important life skill. This cannot be done if a student does not feel comfortable making mistakes. We encourage students to take risks by encouraging students to ask questions and analyze their answers whether right or wrong. We instill the concept that we can learn as much or more from "wrong" answers through the inquiry method and by providing examples of breakthroughs through "wrong results."

Through these methods, we nurture learners to feel comfortable pushing for deeper understandings of what they are learning. We ask them to probe and question how they learn, to learn how to learn. This environment prepares them to be lifelong learners and to be successful in a complex and unpredictable world.

By allowing students to learn in different ways, and by building a spirit of respect for everyone and for differing opinions, students become more accepting of others who are different from themselves. Working in groups with peers, students learn to cooperate with others in order to achieve a common goal. These valuable skills in negotiating and compromising prepare our students to participate successfully in society.

### **C. SCHOOL DATA PROFILE/ANALYSIS (2-3 pages)**

#### **1. *Where is the school now? What do the data / information collected and analyzed tell you about the school?***

Palms Elementary is one of the more diverse schools in Los Angeles. Currently, more than 20 languages are spoken on campus and every major religion is represented. Our students learn, work and play with individuals from all over the world. Approximately 20% of our students are first generation and another 30% are second generation. We are a residential school that also enrolls students in our School for Advanced Studies, our Deaf or Hard of Hearing program, and various Special Education placements. With 70% of our students eligible for free or reduced lunch, we are categorized as a Title 1 School.

At Palms we utilize a variety of qualitative and quantitative data sets. The most significant information is that Palms received an API score of 830 on Spring 2012 CST. That is a 61 point increase over the previous year. Of the total population of students tested, 61% of our students scored proficient or advanced in Language Arts and 64% of our students scored proficient or advanced in Math. Further, 57% of our third graders were proficient or advanced in Language Arts. Over the past five years, we have increased our API by 87 points and our Language Arts proficiency rate by 22.1%. Most staggering is that, during that time, every significant subgroup increased their Language Arts proficiency rate at least 19%. Our African American students increased their Language Arts proficiency rate by 35%.

There exists a slight achievement gap between our English Only and English Learners. We do understand the gap is partially due to the difficulties of some of our students in acquiring a second language. However, we feel that all of our English learners should grow at least one CELDT level per year. Currently, 65% of our English Learners grow at least one CELDT level per year.

#### **2. *Based on your analysis and current available resources, please identify the most central and urgent issues/challenges that are hindering the school from improving student learning and achieving the vision of the successful graduate and the school articulated***

***above? What is the supporting evidence that leads you to identify the items listed above as high priorities?***

Currently, schools are forced to hire staff from rehire lists or have an employee “placed” at the location. This mandate limits the number of potential employees. We feel that in order to continue our movement towards true collaboration we must find individuals who are dedicated to this idea.

Schools must follow Professional Development mandates. We are forced to lead Professional Development sessions that are designed by LAUSD departments detached from local schools. Although many of the workshops are beneficial to the district as a whole, they don’t address specific school related concerns. All schools are not the same.

Last year, due to our increased number of grade level meetings and staff-developed grade level topics our teachers truly collaborated. They became more interested in working together for the larger cause than being independent. Also, the staff does not feel invested in many of the professional development topics mandated by the district. On their PD reflection sheets, faculty members expressed a general disinterest in the generic LAUSD Professional Development sessions. They instead would like to design a Professional Development that is site specific.

#### **D. RATIONALE FOR CHOOSING THE LOCAL INITIATIVE SCHOOL MODEL (1-2 pages)**

Just as every child is unique and learns in his or her own way, every school community is unique. We are choosing the Local Initiative School Model so that we may more fully implement our vision. We believe that by taking advantage of the three waivers listed below, we will create a more tailored school for our particular population. The three waivers are numbers 5, 7, and 9, which involve the local schedule, the planning of professional development and the hiring of staff and faculty.

In order to be able to stay true to our vision, we need to be able to plan the professional development to fit it. This training needs to be consistent and ongoing. We also feel a need for trainings to fit our particular population of students and teachers.

We have a large population of English Language Learners. In order to be able to serve this population in the best way possible, we seek to develop a greater facility to monitor these students as they move through their ELD levels. This means spending more time collaborating across grade levels, as well as deepening teacher skills and strategies to develop strong English language competencies.

A further priority of ours is to develop better methods to differentiate learning for students. We want to become more knowledgeable and consistent about identifying gifted students and developing a curriculum and strategies to better serve these students. Similarly, we want to more effectively identify the needs of students with disabilities and other special needs in order to better serve them and their families.

This kind of professional development needs to be carefully planned out and scheduled. It is essential that these sessions are relevant, ongoing, and tailored toward the changing needs of the school. In each of these sessions, we will strive to build communication and collaboration skills between teachers, grade levels, administrators and parents.

Both waivers 5 and 7 allow for such professional development. Waiver 7 gives us the ability to plan and develop these endeavors and waiver 5 provides us the time to do so.

We have a long history at Palms as a school that strives to build a strong learning community through the collaboration of all stakeholders. Waiver 9 allows us to choose the faculty and staff who are capable of this collaboration and can help us fully achieve our vision. Waiver 9 also allows us to choose persons who could lend expertise in areas that we lack, making us a more productive whole.

#### **E. LOCAL INITIATIVE SCHOOL WAIVER & RATIONALE (1-12pages)**

Please indicate which waivers you are seeking through your Local Initiative Schools proposal. Build on the priority areas identified above as central to transforming your school. As you are writing this section, please indicate if implementation of the waiver is cost-neutral and if not, identify funding needed for successful implementation.

- 1. *Readoption in the Local Initiative School program of any current special conditions/waivers that are already applicable to the school such as School Based Management (SBM).***

- Yes, we are selecting this waiver*  
 *No, we are not selecting this waiver*

***If you have selected no, please proceed to number 2. If you have selected yes, please address the following prompts:***

- i. What areas of concern identified in Section C do you believe this waiver will help your school impact?
- ii. Describe how you will implement this waiver and the alternative language you will substitute for the contract language or policy you are waiving.
- iii. How will it affect students? How will it affect staff? How will it affect parents?

- 2. *Methods to improve pedagogy and student achievement***

- Yes, we are selecting this waiver*  
 *No, we are not selecting this waiver*

***If you have selected no, please proceed to number 3. If you have selected yes, please address the following prompts:***

- i. What areas of concern identified in Section C do you believe this waiver will help your school impact?
- ii. Describe how you will implement this waiver and the alternative language you will substitute for the contract language or policy you are waiving.
- iii. How will it affect students? How will it affect staff? How will it affect parents?

**3. Locally determined curriculum, instructional standards, objectives, and special emphasis supplanting District standards (subject to State and District minimum curriculum standards)**

- Yes, we are selecting this waiver*  
 *No, we are not selecting this waiver*

***If you have selected no, please proceed to number 4. If you have selected yes, please address the following prompts:***

- i. What areas of concern identified in Section C do you believe this waiver will help your school impact?
- ii. Describe how you will implement this waiver and the alternative language you will substitute for the contract language or policy you are waiving.
- iii. How will it affect students? How will it affect staff? How will it affect parents?

**4. Assessment**

- Yes, we are selecting this waiver*  
 *No, we are not selecting this waiver*

***If you have selected no, please proceed to number 5. If you have selected yes, please address the following prompts:***

- i. What areas of concern identified in Section C do you believe this waiver will help your school impact?
- ii. Describe how you will implement this waiver and the alternative language you will substitute for the contract language or policy you are waiving.
- iii. How will it affect students? How will it affect staff? How will it affect parents?

**5. Local Schedule and Strategies**

- Yes, we are selecting this waiver*  
 *No, we are not selecting this waiver*

***If you have selected no, please proceed to number 6. If you have selected yes, please address the following prompts:***

- i. What areas of concern identified in Section C do you believe this waiver will help your school impact?

Our school serves a community with a high transiency rate and large population of English Language Learners. The staff has identified a need to improve our ability to connect with and academically engage this community within our school. We believe that our current professional development schedule in conjunction with district mandated trainings does not allow sufficient time for staff members to meet that need. We intend to use this waiver to increase the time spent focusing on the specific needs of our school community, thereby providing more opportunities for staff, parent, and student ownership of Palms Elementary.

- ii. Describe how you will implement this waiver and the alternative language you will substitute for the contract language or policy you are waiving.

The current academic calendar in use at Palms includes 26 Tuesdays wherein students are dismissed 60 minutes early. This provides opportunities for professional development including collaborative planning time. The remainder of Tuesdays in the school calendar year are full instructional days. We intend to increase the number of Tuesdays used for professional development time to 38 days (or every Tuesday available during the school calendar year). Instructional time will be adjusted to meet California State requirements on instructional minutes.

Alternative Language in regards to contract:

Article IX-B – Professional Development

Section 3.1 b Effective August 2013 at Palms Elementary, grades 1-5 and in full-day kindergarten, such time shall total 2,280 yearly minutes and shall be accumulated by increasing instructional time by 14 minutes per day in 180-day schools. Students will be dismissed 60 minutes earlier than normal dismissal time on 38 Tuesdays, facilitating the use of the banked time for professional development purposes on those days.

- iii. How will it affect students? How will it affect staff? How will it affect parents?

Parents and students will be able to rely on a consistent Tuesday early dismissal, which will help to eliminate confusion over pick up times. This will help to ensure that maximum time is available for teachers to spend in professional development.

In conjunction with the requested waiver proposal for professional development, this waiver will allow staff to expand our current efforts to analyze data deeply and with purpose to design and implement targeted trainings based on that data analysis. We feel that the increased time and consistency of the professional development schedule will allow Palms Elementary staff more opportunity to take ownership over our increased learning and growth as educators. Increasing the number of professional development days in the school year will allow teachers to request, design and even implement trainings that specifically suit our needs as a

community. Such an opportunity will earn increased involvement and enthusiasm from the staff as well as increasing the academic and social/emotional success of our students.

**6. Internal Organization Plan**

- Yes, we are selecting this waiver*  
 *No, we are not selecting this waiver*

***If you have selected no, please proceed to number 7. If you have selected yes, please address the following prompts:***

- i. What areas of concern identified in Section C do you believe this waiver will help your school impact?
- ii. Describe how you will implement this waiver and the alternative language you will substitute for the contract language or policy you are waiving.
- iii. How will it affect students? How will it affect staff? How will it affect parents?

**7. Professional Development**

- Yes, we are selecting this waiver*  
 *No, we are not selecting this waiver*

***If you have selected no, please proceed to number 8. If you have selected yes, please address the following prompts:***

- i. What areas of concern identified in Section C do you believe this waiver will help your school impact?

As mentioned in Number 5, our school has determined that serving our population of English Language Learners is an area of need. We intend to use this waiver to design professional development sessions that particularly target the needs of this population, as well as address the varied learning needs of our staff. We intend to include differentiated trainings based on the needs and current abilities of the staff. This will also improve our ability to address areas of concern as revealed by in depth analysis of the data during grade level professional development sessions.

- ii. Describe how you will implement this waiver and the alternative language you will substitute for the contract language or policy you are waiving.

We intend to follow a cycle of inquiry format in which teachers will become leaders and experts at identifying needs within their individual classrooms and grades. In whole group professional developments, they will use data collection and interpretation to target specific areas of need and then create objectives that

will show mastery in those areas. Teachers will work collaboratively at grade levels to select materials and design lessons that will address the targeted areas of need. Each teacher will then deliver the lessons and evaluate the resulting student work. Grade levels will then identify instruction successes and continuing student needs. The whole group will meet again to reevaluate continuing or new objectives to restart the cycle. The balance of collaborative efforts by grade level teams balanced with whole group evaluation of the data will help to empower the teachers and encourage a more in depth assessment of instructional success by examination of student work samples and assessments.

The proposed waiver encompasses the current momentum within the school site and builds upon it. In order to continue to improve upon the success of the past year, we feel that we must incorporate the collaborative achievements of the grade levels into the collective culture of the school wide community. By placing ownership of that process and structure into the hands of individual teachers while remaining answerable to the data, we can achieve greater success as a whole.

The contract language will remain unchanged and as follows:

#### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1.0 Purpose and Goals: Regular professional development and training is essential to the competence and overall effectiveness of all teachers and support personnel, no matter how experienced they may be. Participation in such continued learning is a required professional duty and part of each teacher's basic personal obligation to the profession and to the students of the District. At its best, professional development and continued learning is grounded in the instructional goals and programs of the District and the school, the best practices of successful teachers, and the everyday needs of students and teachers. While no professional development program will accomplish all goals for all participants, it is agreed that all professional development programs and activities -- whether designed and/or delivered by the Central District, a Local District, or the local school -- should seek to achieve the following goals, as applicable:

- a. Be grounded in, or consistent with, the California Standards for the Teaching Profession, and with any applicable State and District mandates, standards, initiatives and/or priorities;
- b. Be appropriately responsive to the site's needs assessment and/or evaluations of similar programs offered in the past;
- c. Deepen and broaden knowledge of subject matter and instructional content; as appropriate, be job-specific and differentiated to meet different experience levels, and designed for cumulative and sustained impact;
- d. Provide a strong foundation in the pedagogy of particular disciplines, assignments and instructional programs, knowledge about the teaching and learning processes, and improvement of the environment for student learning;

- e. Provide knowledge of applicable standards, the differences between standards-based instruction and other forms of instruction, and how to know when students are meeting or progressing toward a given standard;
- f. Be intellectually engaging and reflect the complexity of the teaching and learning processes; and
- g. Encourage and enable teachers to work together to provide consistent instruction and reinforce student progress.

iii. How will it affect students? How will it affect staff? How will it affect parents?

In conjunction with waiver 5, this waiver will allow staff more deeply focused and directed professional developments that will result in better instruction for all students. As a result, Palms Elementary will continue to build a deserved reputation as a school that cares for and responds to the needs of its population of learners. The rapport between school and community will continue to grow resulting in greater success and opportunities for expanded learning.

#### 8. Budget

- Yes, we are selecting this waiver*  
 *No, we are not selecting this waiver*

***If you have selected no, please proceed to number 9. If you have selected yes, please address the following prompts:***

- i. What areas of concern identified in Section C do you believe this waiver will help your school impact?
- ii. Describe how you will implement this waiver and the alternative language you will substitute for the contact language or policy you are waiving.
- iii. How will it affect students? How will it affect staff? How will it affect parents?

#### 9. A Requirement for "mutual consent"

- Yes, we are selecting this waiver*  
 *No, we are not selecting this waiver*

***If you have selected no, please proceed to number 10. If you have selected yes, please address the following prompts:***

- i. What areas of concern identified in Section C do you believe this waiver will help your school impact?

We are extremely excited about the academic progress that students have made at Palms Elementary, particularly in the last year. The single most significant change contributing to that progress has been increased collaboration and

communication between teachers. Due to the current make-up of the staff, it is within reason to anticipate that one quarter of the staff will be retiring within the next four years. It seems integral to our continued improvement that we are able to fill these positions with staff that share our enthusiasm for collaboration. In order to fulfill our vision of the school, we hope to find staff members that will meld with and expand the community that exists at Palms Elementary. Our concern in requesting this waiver is that we not be constrained by LAUSD mandates to accept staff members that will not be a good fit with our Vision Statement.

Describe how you will implement this waiver and the alternative language you will substitute for the contract language or policy you are waiving.

In order to ensure that staff members hired at Palms Elementary will be highly qualified participants in the community that we are engaged in creating, they shall be required to fulfill criteria as developed by the Local School Leadership Council in keeping with the Vision Statement.

There shall be a Personnel Team designated to participate in the selection of full-time certificated staff for the school. It shall consist of:

1. Four teachers (two elected for that purpose, plus the Chapter chair and the appropriate department of grade level chair for the opening being filled);
2. The Principal of designated administrator;
3. A classified employee selected by the school's classified staff;
4. Two parents selected by the parents on the School Site Council

- ii. How will it affect students? How will it affect staff? How will it affect parents?

The community of Palms Elementary will be positively affected by ensuring that we are able to control the incoming elements of our staff. Parents and staff members will be able self-select to create a community of educators with a shared vision of what our campus should and will offer to our students. This increased participation will encourage not only a stronger community, but also a more empowered one.

#### **10. Process for determining teacher assignments**

- Yes, we are selecting this waiver**  
 **No, we are not selecting this waiver**

***If you have selected no, please proceed to number 11. If you have selected yes, please address the following prompts:***

- i. What areas of concern identified in Section C do you believe this waiver will help your school impact?

- ii. Describe how you will implement this waiver and the alternative language you will substitute for the contract language or policy you are waiving.
- iii. How will it affect students? How will it affect staff? How will it affect parents?

**11. Process for assigning teachers to grade levels, subjects, classes, etc.**

- Yes, we are selecting this waiver**  
 **No, we are not selecting this waiver**

***If you have selected no, please proceed to number 12. If you have selected yes, please address the following prompts:***

- i. What areas of concern identified in Section C do you believe this waiver will help your school impact?
- ii. Describe how you will implement this waiver and the alternative language you will substitute for the contract language or policy you are waiving.
- iii. How will it affect students? How will it affect staff? How will it affect parents?

**12. School student discipline guidelines and code of conduct**

- Yes, we are selecting this waiver**  
 **No, we are not selecting this waiver**

***If you have selected no, please proceed to number 13. If you have selected yes, please address the following prompts:***

- i. What areas of concern identified in Section C do you believe this waiver will help your school impact?
- ii. Describe how you will implement this waiver and the alternative language you will substitute for the contract language or policy you are waiving.
- iii. How will it affect students? How will it affect staff? How will it affect parents?

**13. School health and safety matters**

- Yes, we are selecting this waiver**  
 **No, we are not selecting this waiver**

***If you have selected no, please proceed to number 14. If you have selected yes, please address the following prompts:***

- i. What areas of concern identified in Section C do you believe this waiver will help your school impact?
- ii. Describe how you will implement this waiver and the alternative language you will substitute for the contract language or policy you are waiving.
- iii. How will it affect students? How will it affect staff? How will it affect parents?

#### **14. Additional waivers**

### **G. FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Palms Elementary is committed to family and community engagement. The principal preaches at every meeting that this is a community school and he wishes not to make decisions unilaterally. Many of our incredible programs have come from parent suggestions. In an effort to improve communication and ensure a shared vision, we regularly hold parent meetings.

Our School Site Council is very thorough. We meet regularly to discuss family and community concerns then apply resources to remedy those concerns. The parents know that their voice is equal to any staff member. We discuss, argue and agree on what the students deserve. Through the efforts of our SSC, students can now receive tutoring afterschool by a credentialed teacher and have the native language supported by paraprofessional assistance.

One of the biggest obstacles to a successful SSC and school-family communication was the language barrier. Sixty-three percent of our student population is Latino/Hispanic. Our School Administrative Assistant, Office Technician and (district appointed) Education Aide do not speak Spanish. The SSC committed monies to address these needs. We purchased three different Community Representatives. Families can come at any time and there will be a Spanish speaking staff member ready to assist.

We have created one of the more efficient and effective Local School Leadership Council. Over the past few years, our LSLC (made up of parents, teachers and the administrator) has streamlined Professional Development workshops, changed the school calendar and hired staff based upon our needs.

Every month we hold a “Coffee with the Principal”. At the townhouse style meetings, we discuss current issues and ask for suggestions to improve the school. At a recent “Coffee with the Principal” one parent suggested placing a camera/buzzer system to improve the security of the school. The idea was well-received by the parents in attendance. Due to their interest we have a drafted a proposal for the camera/buzzer system and am awaiting the “ok” from specific district personnel. Meanwhile, we have already raised \$3,000 for the system.

During the 2009-2010 School Year, our Parent Center was invited to speak at the Board of Education. As a model Parent Center, our Community Representative and parents discussed our program and success. During the 2010-2011, we received the “Target Parent Center Award” given to highly successful. After the 2011-2012 School Year, we were recognized by having the highest percent of parent involvement (as measured by responses to the School Report Card) in Local District 3.

## H. SCHOOL PLANNING TEAM (2-3 pages)

### 1. *Who are the members of your planning team?*

Keith Abrahams	Principal
Monica Davis	English Learner Coordinator
Regina Bryant	UTLA Representative
Angela Alston	General Education Teacher
Debra Breeding	General Education Teacher
Allegra Tetreault	Special Education Teacher
Elsy Villafranca	Special Education Teacher
Darlean Hughes	School Administrative Assistant
Yolany Guzman	Community Representative
Christine Ascencio	Parent
Garvin de Gale	Parent
Allen Elmore	Parent
Neima Estrada	Parent
Maria Hernandez	Parent
Blake Tombolini	Parent
Sabrina Vinson Smith	Parent

### 2. *How were parents and the community engaged in the development of the plan?*

Upon learning of the announcement of the Local Initiative School Proposal, we quickly began spreading the word. It was our goal to have every stakeholder represented in this process. Therefore, we designed a diverse team to spearhead this endeavor. It is essential that our families and community members not only support, but continue to develop an enriching and modern learning environment.

Lead teacher Debra Breeding and Principal Keith Abrahams attended the Autonomy workshops facilitated by the LOOC. At faculty meeting (dated) Ms. Breeding and Mr. Abrahams announced the possibility of Palms Elementary becoming a Local Initiative School. The staff overwhelmingly supported the idea. At the conclusion of that meeting, five additional teachers (which include the EL Coordinator and UTLA chair) volunteered to be a member of Palms' design team.

At the School Site Council Meeting (12-6-12) the design team pitched the idea to the council. The five members of the SSC agreed with our direction. Three of the five members volunteered to be a member of Palms' design team.

At the Local School Leadership Council Meeting (12-12-12) the design team pitched the idea to the school's governing body. The five parent members of the LSLC were excited about the idea of autonomy to specific areas. Two of the five members volunteered to be a member of Palms' design team.

The design team called a special “Coffee with the Principal” (12-14-12) to discuss this idea with the all available parents. Roughly 60 parents were present when the Principal discussed the idea of autonomy. He stated that we had not yet decided on the specific waivers but felt it important for parents to express their thoughts and concerns. The parents wanted a more consistent calendar (every Tuesday becoming Banked Time) and control over staffing. Two parents and the Community Representative volunteered to be a member of Palms’ design team.

Next the design team met to initially develop the waivers. We decided to ask for three areas of autonomy (described in Section C). Together, we wrote the description for the three waivers and disseminated that document to the staff as a whole. We then called a second “Coffee with the Principal” (1-18-13) to announce our official proposal.

#### **I. IMPLEMENTATION (2-3 pages)**

In order to address the implementation of the requested waivers, we are prepared to do the following. We intend to increase the number of Tuesdays used for professional development time to 38 days (or every Tuesday available during the school calendar year) from 26 Tuesdays a year. Effective August 2013 at Palms Elementary, grades 1-5 and in full-day kindergarten, such time shall total 2,280 yearly minutes and shall be accumulated by increasing instructional time by 14 minutes per day in 180-day schools. Students will be dismissed 60 minutes earlier than normal dismissal time on 38 Tuesdays, facilitating the use of the banked time for professional development purposes on those days.

Communicating the new schedule to all members of the Palms Elementary community is essential in the successful implementation of the LIS waivers. We will need to communicate the changes to the following three groups: teacher/staff, parents/students, and after-school staff. Teachers will attend meetings to discuss any necessary adjustments required to accommodate the new schedule. Before the end of the current school year, we plan to hold a special parent meeting informing parents of the rationale for our adoption of the Local Initiative School Plan and the new bell schedule. In addition, flyers will be sent home at least twice before the end of the year and also prior to the start of the 2013-2014 school year. We intend to arrange early enrollment for the various after school programs to ensure that they are available from the first week of school. Accordingly, we will coordinate with the after-school personnel and organize our paraprofessionals’ schedules before the end of the year.

Concerning the implementation of the waiver for Professional Development, we will establish a committee with the intent of designing a comprehensive and systemic program. Towards the end of current school year, we will survey the staff regarding their strengths, areas of need, and any specific concerns. This plan will require a dedicated committee that will organize sessions into a structured framework. The calendar will be comprised of a monthly schedule of four units addressing the cycle of inquiry, technology and professional skills, instructional strategies, and state/district mandates. In addition, each session will be differentiated according to the skill level and needs of the teachers.

In the cycle of inquiry format, teachers will become leaders and experts at identifying needs within their individual classrooms and grades. In whole group professional developments, they will use data collection and interpretation to target specific areas of need and then create objectives that will show mastery in those areas. Teachers will work collaboratively at grade levels to select materials and design lessons that will address the targeted areas of need. Each teacher will then deliver the lessons and evaluate the resulting student work. Grade levels will then identify instruction successes and continuing student needs. The whole group will meet again to reevaluate continuing or new objectives to restart the cycle. The balance of collaborative efforts by grade level teams balanced with whole group evaluation of the data will help to empower the teachers and encourage a more in depth assessment of instructional success by examination of student work samples and assessments.

In the technology and professional skills sessions, teachers will learn how to use web-based resources such as MyData, Core K-12, and mClass Home to analyze student data and inform their instructional planning. Moreover, teachers will have the opportunity to explore and increase proficiency in other technological resources available at our school such as iPads, Smartboards, the computer lab, document readers, and the video technology room. This will enable teachers to incorporate these strategies in the classroom and impart 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills to our students. Increased technological skills will allow students to better meet the Common Core Standards through multiple modes of learning.

The instructional strategies unit will prioritize teacher strengths and use their expertise to lead others in best practices. The focus of this unit will be sharing successful methods and pedagogy with colleagues. Some sessions may involve differentiated opportunities based on teacher interest such as peer coaching, classroom walk-throughs, lesson studies, and reviews of current educational literature. In addition, these sessions will encourage collaboration and team-building amongst faculty leading to increased rapport and professionalism.

The fourth unit session time will be used to address state and district-mandated program requirements such as the Child Abuse, Master Plan, and Blood-Borne Pathogen trainings. During these sessions, a committee of parents, administrators, staff, the Intervention Coordinator, and the Local School Leadership Council members will create a comprehensive plan for implementing in-services with the goal of using our paraprofessionals, volunteers and parents for academic support. In this way we will be strengthening our overall academic program, in particular for our EL population, and building consistency throughout the Palms Elementary learning community. Additional sessions (i.e. months with five Tuesdays) will be used to plan special events, an example of which is Palms Family Nights. These sessions will focus on the curricular areas of literacy, math, and science; they will also include topics such as Earth Day and College Month.

For the purpose of implementing the waiver of the Requirement for “mutual consent” staff members hired at Palms Elementary shall be required to fulfill criteria as developed

by the Local School Leadership Council in keeping with the Vision and Mission Statements. This will help to guarantee that they will add to the cohesive, collegial atmosphere of the Palms Elementary Learning Community. There shall be a Personnel Team designated to participate in the selection of full-time certificated staff for the school. It shall consist of:

1. Four teachers (two elected for that purpose, plus the Chapter chair and the appropriate department of grade level chair for the opening being filled);
2. The Principal or designated administrator;
3. A classified employee selected by the school's classified staff;
4. Two parents selected by the parents on the School Site Council Develop hiring committee, establish hiring protocol.

Furthermore, the Personnel Team will develop a standard hiring protocol that will consist of a set portfolio of documents, interview questions, and other such requisites. This will ensure the objective selection of members based on standard protocol, not favoritism.

#### J. REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

The following attachments are required and should be included in the Table of Contents. They do not count toward the page limit. These attachments should be part of the entire proposal package that will be voted on by the staff.

- Attachment A1-2 (Letter of Interest/List of Waivers)
- Support of Petition (signatures of UTLA-represented certificated staff and documentation of parent and community engagement)
- Written consent of Principal

